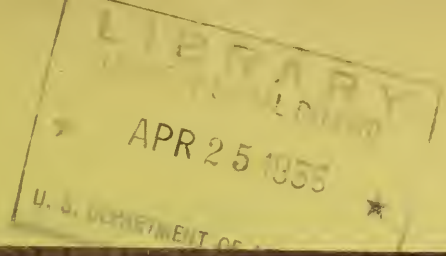


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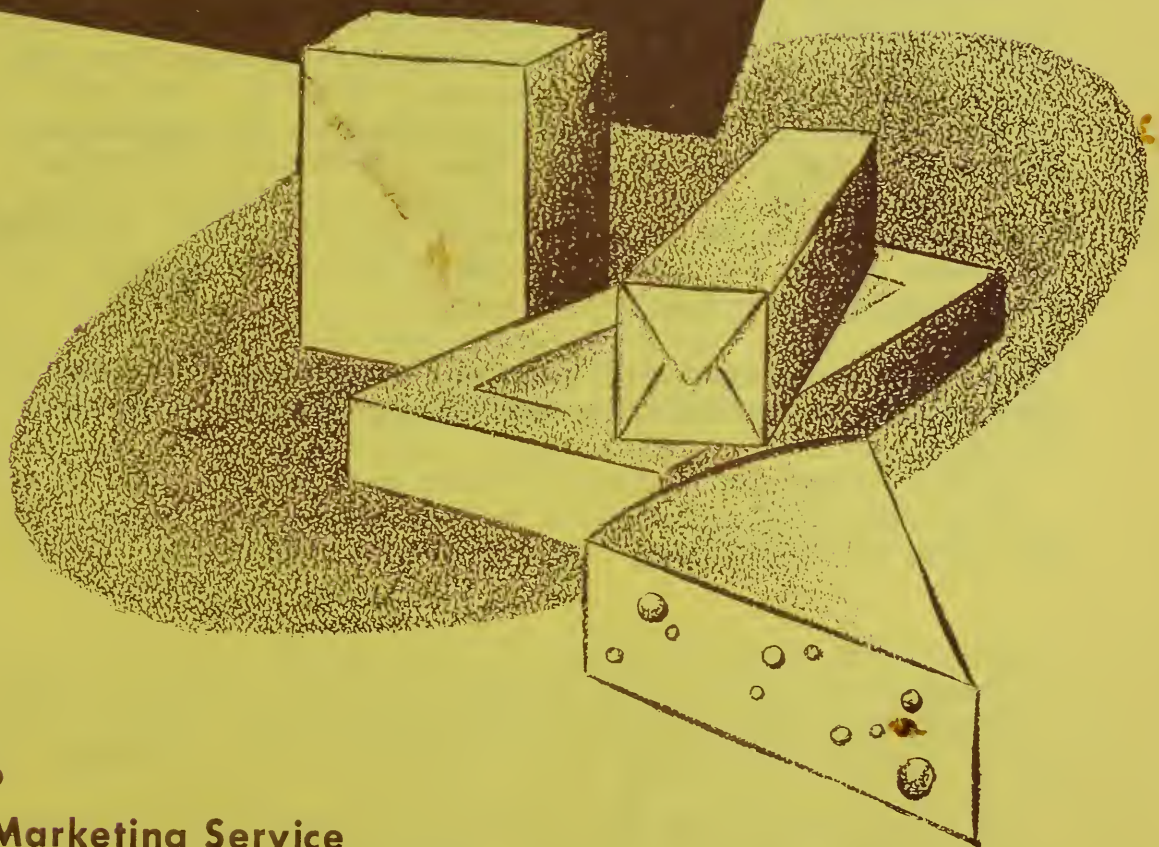
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# Household Purchases of Butter, Cheese, Nonfat Dry Milk Solids, and Margarine, December 1955



HPD-19

February 1956

Agricultural Marketing Service

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

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## PREFACE

This is one in a series of monthly reports, the first of which was published for April 1954, showing estimates of current household purchases and related information for butter, cheese, nonfat dry milk solids, and margarine. This series is based on information obtained in a cooperative project financed by the United States Department of Agriculture and by the dairy industry through the American Dairy Association. The Department funds are provided under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (RMA, Title II).

The basic data presented herein were collected by the Market Research Corporation of America from its National Consumer Panel and were tabulated by it, under contract with the Department. The data beginning April 1954 are based on reports from a sample of approximately 5,800 families. Additional data on butter and margarine only for the months April 1953-March 1954 are also available. The data prior to April 1954 were based on a sample of about 4,300 families and were adjusted to the level currently reported from the 5,800-family sample.

The estimates include only purchases for consumption by household consumers and do not reflect volume purchased by hotels, restaurants, hospitals, or other institutions.

This report was prepared in the Market Development Branch of the Marketing Research Division, Agricultural Marketing Service.



HOUSEHOLD PURCHASES OF BUTTER, CHEESE, NONFAT DRY  
MILK SOLIDS, AND MARGARINE, DECEMBER 1955

The data in this report are estimates of total purchases by household consumers only, and do not include consumption in restaurants, hotels, hospitals, or other institutional outlets. Data for a month are for a 4-week period (28 days) in order to permit comparisons of purchase volume between periods of equal length.

SUMMARY

Butter purchases by United States householders during December 1955 were 5 percent greater than in December 1954. This marked the twenty-first consecutive month in which butter purchases were larger than in the same month a year earlier. Margarine purchases by householders during December 1955 were at the same level as in December 1954. This was the third consecutive month in which margarine purchases had been the same as or smaller than a year earlier following 12 months in which they had been larger.

Householders also reported during December 1955 smaller total purchases of natural cheese and processed cheese products than in December 1954. Purchases of nonfat dry milk solids for home use in December 1955 were more than 25 percent larger than during December 1954.

These indications of change in monthly household purchase volumes for butter, margarine, cheese, and nonfat dry milk solids are based on continuing weekly reports from a representative nationwide sample of 5,800 families.

Butter: Total purchases of butter for household use during the 4-week period of December 1955 were reported at over 72 million pounds, or 3 million pounds larger than in December 1954. About 49 percent of all families purchased butter in December 1955, just above the reported percentage buying in the same month a year earlier. Both the reported average size of purchase and frequency of purchase per buying family were slightly higher than a year earlier in December 1955; this was the first time in many months that both these indicators were above the same month a year earlier (table 1).

Butter purchases by householders during the 9-month period April-December 1955 were almost 6 percent greater than in the corresponding period a year earlier. In the dairy marketing year April 1954-March 1955, these purchases were 13 percent larger than in the previous year.

Purchases of butter for household use increased about 4 million pounds from November to December 1955. This was a greater November to December increase than shown between the same months in 1953 and 1954.

Consumers in this survey reported little change in the average price paid for butter during the last 4 months of 1955. The December 1955 reported price was almost 68 cents per pound, about 1 cent less per pound than in December 1954 and about 8 cents less per pound than in December 1953.

Margarine: Total purchases of margarine for household use during December 1955 were estimated at over 107 million pounds, virtually the same as the purchase level reported in December 1954. The reported percentage of all families buying margarine during December 1955--about 63 percent--was about the same as in December 1954; in the preceding 2 months, October and November 1955, this percentage had been 59 and 61 percent, respectively, or about 3 points less than a year earlier. Those families buying margarine continued buying larger amounts per purchase than in the same months of 1954 but they were making less frequent purchases of margarine than a year earlier (table 2).

During April-December 1955 household purchases of margarine were almost 5 percent larger than in the corresponding period of 1954. In the preceding 12 months, April 1954-March 1955, these purchases had been 3 percent greater than in the 1953-54 year.

Householders reported a large increase in margarine purchases--almost 10 million pounds--from November to December 1955. Purchases of margarine had also increased from November to December in 1953 and 1954, but not in the same magnitude as in 1955.

Householders in the National Consumer Panel reported virtually no change in the average price paid for margarine during October, November, and December 1955. However, the reported price, close to 25 cents per pound, was about 1 cent less per pound than a year earlier.

About 22 percent of all families reported buying both butter and margarine in December 1955, while about 10 percent bought neither of these products during the month. These indications are at their high and low points, respectively, for the dairy marketing year.

Cheese: Total household purchases of natural and processed cheese (purchased weight basis) in December 1955, were estimated at 48.5 million pounds compared with 49.8 million pounds a year earlier. The total for December 1955 reflected a reduction from a year earlier of 0.3 million pounds in natural cheese purchases and of 1.0 million pounds in total processed cheese purchases.

Natural cheese purchases by households during December 1955 were reported at 27.9 million pounds, about 1 percent less than a year earlier. December 1955 was the first month in the period April-December 1955 in which natural cheese purchases had been below the same month a year earlier. For April-December 1955, total natural cheese purchases were about 6 percent greater than in April-December 1954 (table 4).



Total processed cheese purchases--including processed cheese, cheese spreads and cheese foods--for household use in December 1955 were reported at 20.5 million pounds, about 5 percent less than in December 1954. In the period, April-November 1955, the monthly level of processed cheese purchases had ranged from 12 to 20 percent below a year earlier. For the April-December 1955 period, total purchases of processed cheese products were down about 15 percent from the corresponding period of 1954, reflecting a drop of 9 percent in processed cheese, 41 percent in cheese foods, but an increase of 10 percent in cheese spreads purchases.

Cottage cheese purchases, not included in the totals above, were reported at 30.5 million pounds in December 1955 compared with 30.1 million pounds in December 1954. Purchases of cottage cheese for household use each month during April-December 1955 were very close to the level of a year earlier and for the period as a whole were down only about 1 percent.

Purchases of cottage cheese for home use declined about 1.7 million pounds from November to December 1955, about 1 million pounds less than the reported decrease between the same months in 1954. Prices reported paid for cottage cheese moved up slightly from November to December 1955, but in December were still very close to a year earlier. Householders during December 1955 were buying more cottage cheese per purchase than a year earlier. This was a continuation of the trend reported in preceding months (table 6).

Nonfat Dry Milk Solids: Household purchases of nonfat dry milk solids during December 1955 totaled about 12.9 million pounds, a gain of 2.8 million pounds over purchases reported in December 1954. For the 9 months ending December 1955 household purchases of nonfat dry milk solids were about 23 percent greater than in the corresponding period of 1954.

Consumers in this survey reported paying 39.7 cents per pound for nonfat dry milk solids in December 1955, about the same price as in November 1955 and a year earlier. For the third consecutive month the average size of purchase by those families buying nonfat dry milk solids was somewhat higher than a year earlier. This was in contrast to the 6 month period, April-September 1955, during which householders reported smaller average size purchases than in April-September 1954 (table 7).

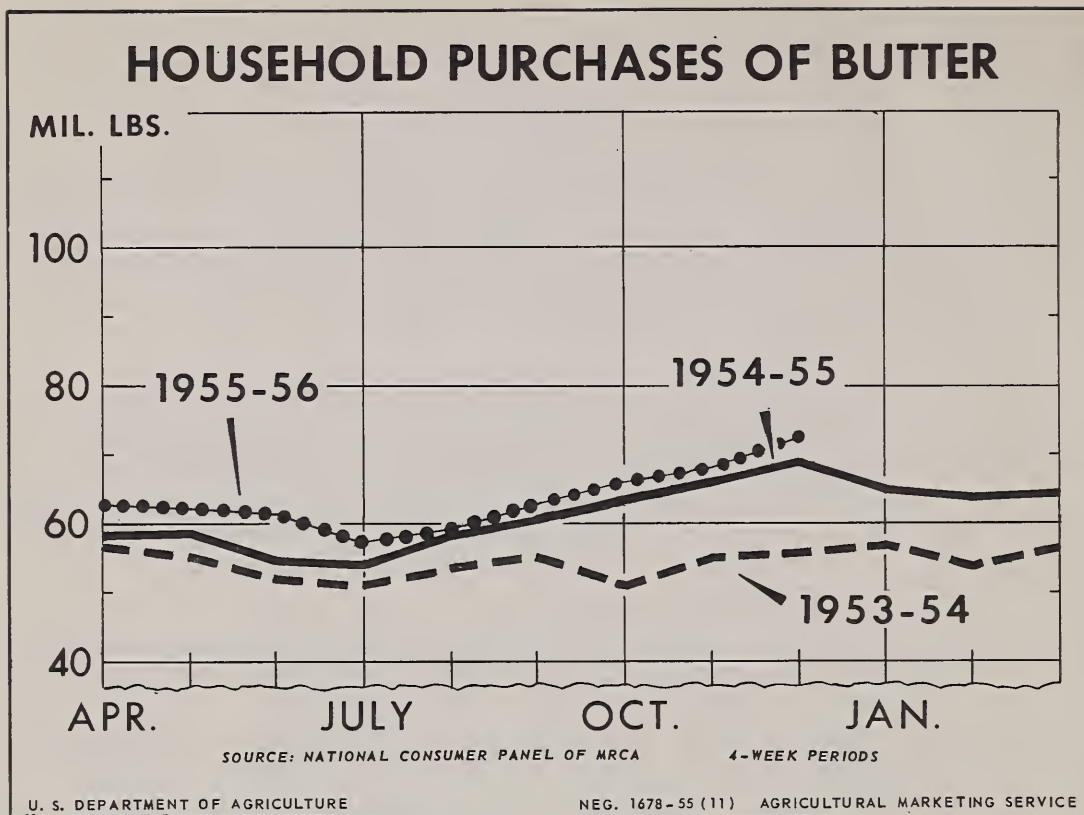


Figure 1

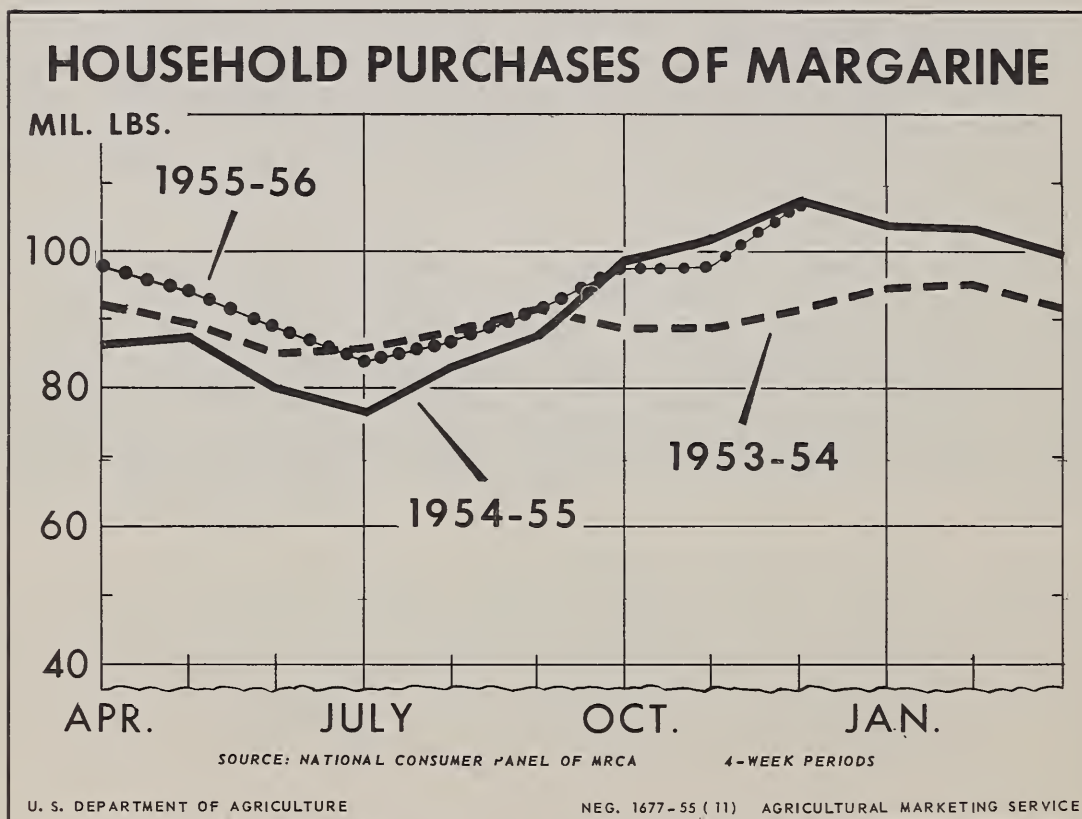


Figure 2



Table 1.--Butter: Household purchases and average price per pound  
U. S., 4-week periods

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Table 2.--Margarine: Household purchases and average price per pound  
U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Quantity purchased						Average price paid per pound		
	Total			Per 1,000 population					
	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54
	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Cents	Cents	Cents
April-----	97.5	86.3	92.1	604	546	605	25.3	26.2	26.2
May-----	93.8	87.1	89.1	581	551	584	24.7	26.4	26.5
June-----	89.1	79.9	84.5	551	506	554	24.7	26.7	26.0
July-----	83.6	76.2	85.5	522	479	558	24.8	26.9	26.0
August-----	86.6	82.7	88.0	540	520	574	25.0	26.8	26.1
September-----	91.5	87.8	91.1	571	552	595	25.1	26.8	25.8
October-----	97.8	98.7	88.2	606	616	573	24.7	26.2	25.4
November-----	97.8	101.8	88.5	607	635	575	24.7	25.5	26.0
December-----	107.3	107.4	91.8	666	670	597	24.6	25.7	26.7
January-----		103.9	94.6		648	614		25.7	26.7
February-----		103.4	94.7		645	600		25.7	25.8
March-----		99.4	91.7		620	581		25.5	25.9
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	Percentage of all families buying			Per buying family					
				Purchases			Quantity per purchase		
	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Number	Number	Number	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds
April-----	60.3	56.4	58.6	2.19	2.38	2.47	1.52	1.45	1.43
May-----	59.5	56.4	57.7	2.11	2.39	2.45	1.54	1.44	1.42
June-----	57.3	54.7	56.9	2.08	2.25	2.35	1.54	1.45	1.43
July-----	55.9	53.5	57.7	2.04	2.23	2.31	1.52	1.43	1.46
August-----	57.1	55.7	58.7	2.08	2.31	2.36	1.51	1.44	1.45
September-----	58.0	58.0	59.9	2.16	2.36	2.40	1.51	1.43	1.43
October-----	59.2	62.4	58.9	2.21	2.39	2.24	1.54	1.46	1.49
November-----	60.6	63.4	60.0	2.15	2.41	2.24	1.55	1.48	1.46
December-----	63.4	63.7	60.0	2.20	2.29	2.37	1.59	1.53	1.47
January-----		63.2	58.7		2.29	2.46		1.48	1.46
February-----		63.3	60.7		2.25	2.37		1.51	1.45
March-----		61.6	59.8		2.24	2.37		1.50	1.43

National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 3.--Cheese: Household purchases and average price per unit,  
U. S., 4-week period, December 1955

Type	Percentage of all families buying any type	Quantity purchased			Average price paid per unit	
		Average per purchase	Total	Per 1,000 population		
		Ounces	1,000 pounds	Pounds	Unit	Cents
Natural						
American	<u>1/</u>	13.4	16,590	102.9	Lb.	64.0
Swiss	<u>1/</u>	10.1	3,440	21.4	Lb.	75.7
Cream	<u>1/</u>	6.2	4,020	24.9	3 oz.	14.2
Other	<u>1/</u>	8.6	3,870	24.0	Lb.	78.4
Processed						
Cheese	<u>1/</u>	10.7	9,240	57.3	Lb.	61.8
Cheese foods	<u>1/</u>	21.2	4,800	29.8	Lb.	45.2
Cheese spreads	<u>1/</u>	15.3	6,510	40.4	Lb.	51.6
Natural and Processed	56.0					
Cottage cheese	<u>1/</u>	16.4	30,540	189.4	12 oz.	21.4

1/ Estimated percentage buying each type is supplied in quarterly report.

National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.



Table 4.--Natural Cheese: Household purchases and average price,  
U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Purchases							
	American		Swiss		Cream		Other	
	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55
	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds
April-----	17,210	14,910	3,290	3,180	3,530	3,390	3,730	3,320
May-----	16,150	15,310	3,460	2,950	3,790	3,460	3,170	3,590
June-----	16,120	13,910	4,070	3,580	3,250	2,880	3,420	2,860
July-----	14,860	14,160	3,450	3,120	2,990	2,500	2,540	2,950
August-----	15,700	15,010	3,450	2,940	2,830	2,310	2,990	2,940
September-----	16,860	16,140	3,630	3,520	3,120	2,790	3,340	2,950
October-----	17,870	17,280	3,780	3,640	3,380	3,370	3,930	3,520
November-----	17,260	16,950	3,610	3,100	3,500	3,670	3,640	3,560
December-----	16,590	16,800	3,440	3,290	4,020	4,090	3,870	4,070
January-----		17,270		3,670		4,210		3,920
February-----		17,920		3,530		3,950		4,240
March-----		18,120		3,860		3,860		3,460
Average price paid								
	Per pound						Per 3 oz.	
	American		Swiss		Other		Cream	
	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55
	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
April-----	62.3	63.6	73.2	78.0	75.4	75.5	14.0	14.1
May-----	63.8	63.0	73.1	76.8	75.8	77.4	14.2	14.3
June-----	63.2	62.3	72.9	75.4	78.7	74.4	14.2	14.3
July-----	63.9	63.0	75.9	75.0	78.2	74.0	14.2	14.4
August-----	63.9	62.9	73.8	75.1	76.4	76.1	14.1	14.4
September-----	63.2	62.0	72.7	74.2	79.6	77.2	14.1	14.2
October-----	62.6	62.0	71.8	72.7	77.8	77.4	14.2	13.7
November-----	62.9	62.8	72.8	74.9	78.2	74.7	14.4	13.5
December-----	64.0	63.0	75.7	75.1	78.4	81.9	14.2	13.9
January-----		63.3		72.0		75.8		13.7
February-----		62.8		72.5		78.8		14.2
March-----		63.4		72.1		75.4		14.0

National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 5.--Processed cheese: Household purchases and average price, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Purchases					
	Processed cheese		Cheese foods		Cheese spreads	
	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-56	1955-56	1954-55
	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>
April-----	9,010	10,740	5,240	9,110	6,410	5,670
May-----	9,640	10,670	4,930	9,020	6,400	6,290
June-----	9,940	10,330	5,210	9,420	6,970	5,450
July-----	9,090	9,900	4,640	7,960	5,940	5,170
August-----	8,820	9,940	4,100	7,580	5,890	5,710
September-----	9,190	10,460	4,560	8,090	6,970	6,000
October-----	9,500	10,000	4,900	8,160	6,750	6,790
November-----	8,580	9,660	4,140	6,360	6,740	6,050
December-----	9,240	9,210	4,800	6,210	6,500	6,130
January-----		10,020		6,970		7,920
February-----		10,700		7,250		8,350
March-----		10,380		6,340		7,800
Period	Average price paid per pound					
	Processed cheese		Cheese foods		Cheese spreads	
	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55
	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>
April-----	61.5	60.9	45.0	47.1	51.0	57.9
May-----	60.4	60.6	44.7	45.8	50.7	52.0
June-----	59.3	61.2	44.2	45.8	50.6	54.3
July-----	60.8	61.5	44.7	46.7	49.9	53.9
August-----	60.8	61.2	44.7	46.6	49.8	51.9
September-----	60.7	60.1	43.3	45.5	50.8	51.9
October-----	60.4	61.2	43.2	44.8	48.7	52.1
November-----	61.2	61.1	44.5	44.5	49.4	53.7
December-----	61.8	62.0	45.2	46.1	51.6	55.6
January-----		61.4		44.9		51.8
February-----		61.4		44.2		49.8
March-----		60.9		44.1		49.9

Table 6.--Cottage Cheese: Household purchases and average price, U. S., 4-week period

Period	Purchases		Average price paid				Size of average purchases	
			Per 12-oz. unit for all purchases		Per actual 12-oz. unit purchases			
	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55
	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Ounces</u>	<u>Ounces</u>
April-----	38,220	37,370	21.2	21.2	22.9	22.7	16.2	15.8
May-----	35,720	36,020	21.2	21.2	23.0	22.5	16.2	15.8
June-----	34,630	35,600	21.0	21.0	22.7	22.7	16.4	15.9
July-----	33,030	34,300	21.0	20.9	22.9	22.7	16.3	15.9
August-----	31,650	32,820	21.2	21.2	23.4	23.0	16.2	15.7
September-----	32,440	31,720	21.3	21.1	23.2	22.8	16.0	15.7
October-----	31,840	32,780	21.3	21.3	23.4	23.0	15.9	15.5
November-----	32,230	32,940	21.2	21.4	23.5	23.1	16.4	15.9
December-----	30,540	30,110	21.4	21.2	23.5	23.1	16.4	16.0
January-----		34,990		21.2		23.2		16.0
February-----		38,200		21.3		23.2		15.8
March-----		43,240		21.2		23.0		16.0

Table 7.--Nonfat Dry milk solids: Household purchases and average price per pound, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Quantity purchased						Average price paid			
	Average		Total		Per		Per pound		Per actual	
	per				1,000		for all		1-pound unit	
	purchase				population		purchases		purchases	
	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55
	Ounces	Ounces	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
April-----	19.5	21.1	13,500	11,080	83.6	70.2	39.7	38.1	35.4	36.7
May-----	19.9	21.1	13,180	10,880	81.6	68.9	39.5	37.8	35.4	36.1
June-----	20.4	22.6	12,420	9,560	76.9	60.5	39.9	37.3	35.8	35.4
July-----	20.5	23.5	12,140	9,560	75.8	60.1	39.7	36.4	35.8	34.8
August-----	20.0	22.6	11,720	9,410	73.1	59.1	39.6	35.5	35.9	33.7
September-----	20.8	22.0	12,230	9,910	76.3	62.3	38.7	36.7	34.9	34.1
October-----	21.3	20.6	12,330	10,860	76.5	67.7	38.7	38.3	35.4	35.0
November-----	21.5	20.3	12,420	10,660	77.0	66.5	39.5	38.5	36.1	35.9
December-----	21.5	19.9	12,880	10,110	79.9	63.1	39.7	39.7	36.6	35.6
January-----		18.9		12,360		77.1		40.5		36.1
February-----		18.8		13,510		84.2		40.3		35.8
March-----		18.6		13,280		82.8		40.2		35.8

National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

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